IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A multipurpose surgical sharps handling device ~~comprising in combination at least two of the following structures~~ with opposed walls configured to be held conveniently in the fingertips of one hand and forming a boundary for surgical articles carried by said device, and including:

a system for temporarily holding a scalpel for no-hands passing of the scalpel between a nurse and a surgeon,

a ~~gapped~~ magnetic zone for no-hands passing of a suture needle with a notch between portions of the magnetic zone for access in the notch by a needle holder,

a closable used interoperative sharps storage container, and

a suture pack carrier.

2. (cancelled).

3. (currently amended) A device for no-hands transfer of a scalpel comprising an injection-molded thermoplastic body including a supporting base,

a scalpel blade receiver adjacent one end of the base,

a scalpel handle grip adjacent an end of the base opposite said one end, the receiver being arranged to limit freedom of movement of the blade laterally while allowing pitch movement of a handle of a scalpel, the handle grip being arranged to receive a mid-section of the handle of a scalpel in a pitch movement towards the base while its blade is received in the receiver, the grip being arranged to resist longitudinal reverse movement of the scalpel blade out of the receiver and the grip and pitch movement out of the grip with a friction force sufficient to reliably hold a scalpel handle in a gripped position while the device is handled by a surgical nurse to present the scalpel handle in a vertical or near vertical position for grasping by a surgeon with a large portion of the scalpel handle on a side of the grip remote from the blade receiver in a cantilever condition extending beyond said device such that it is free of physical interference from adjacent parts of the device.

4. (original) A device as set forth in claim 3, wherein the body includes a finger-grip area to enable the nurse to grasp the device.

5. (currently amended) A device as set forth in claim 4, including laterally extending finger guards on

opposite sides of an area between the grip and the receiver and outward of said finger grip area.

6. (currently amended) A device as set forth in claim 5, wherein the finger guards extend in a plane above ~~the~~ a location ~~of~~ to be occupied by a scalpel in the receiver and in the grip.

7. (currently amended) A device as set forth in claim 6, wherein the finger guards have laterally outward portions remote from said area that extend downward from said plane.

8. (currently amended) A device as set forth in claim 4, wherein the finger grip area has a wasp waist configuration that has a narrow zone between wider zones to facilitate fingertip grasping of the device.

9. (original) A device as set forth in claim 3, wherein the blade receiver includes a narrow throat area to laterally confine the scalpel blade.

10. (currently amended) A device ~~as set forth in claim 9, wherein~~ for no-hands transfer of a scalpel comprising an injection-molded thermoplastic body including a supporting base,

a scalpel blade receiver adjacent one end of the base,

a scalpel handle grip adjacent an end of the base opposite said one end, the receiver being arranged to limit freedom of movement of the blade laterally while allowing pitch movement of a handle of a scalpel, the handle grip being arranged to receive a mid-section of the handle of a scalpel in a pitch movement towards the base while its blade is received in the receiver, the grip being arranged to resist longitudinal reverse movement of the scalpel blade out of the receiver and the grip and pitch movement out of the grip with a friction force sufficient to reliably hold a scalpel handle in a gripped position while the device is handled by a surgical nurse to present the scalpel handle in a vertical or near vertical position for grasping by a surgeon,

the blade receiver including a narrow throat area to laterally confine the scalpel blade,

the throat area ~~includes~~ including a thin membrane that is adapted to be cut by the scalpel blade.

11. (currently amended) A device ~~as set forth in claim 3, wherein~~ for no-hands transfer of a scalpel comprising an injection-molded thermoplastic body including a supporting base,

a scalpel blade receiver adjacent one end of the base,

a scalpel handle grip adjacent an end of the base opposite said one end, the receiver being arranged to

limit freedom of movement of the blade laterally while allowing pitch movement of a handle of a scalpel, the handle grip being arranged to receive a mid-section of the handle of a scalpel in a pitch movement towards the base while its blade is received in the receiver, the grip being arranged to resist longitudinal reverse movement of the scalpel blade out of the receiver and the grip and pitch movement out of the grip with a friction force sufficient to reliably hold a scalpel handle in a gripped position while the device is handled by a surgical nurse to present the scalpel handle in a vertical or near vertical position for grasping by a surgeon,

the base ~~includes~~ including a needle presentation zone including an open slot and magnetic sheet material on opposite sides of said slot, said slot being adapted to receive the jaws of a needle holder.

12. (original) A device as set forth in claim 3, including a restraining portion that prevents a scalpel blade from being released in an upward direction.

13. (currently amended) A multi-purpose surgical sharps handling device comprising an injection-molded thermoplastic body including a scalpel holder and a closable sharps receiving container, the scalpel holder having a blade receiving zone and a handle gripping area that cooperate to support a scalpel in a cantilever

arrangement whereby a substantial portion of the length of the scalpel handle is free of obstruction by the device in a space surrounding said substantial portion and it is thereby readily grasped, the receiving ~~chamber~~ container being adjacent said blade receiving zone and remote from said gripping area.

14. (original) A surgical sharps handling device as set forth in claim 13, wherein said receiving container has a hinged cover and a releasable latch to maintain said cover closed on said container.

15. (currently amended) A multi-purpose surgical sharps handling device ~~as set forth in claim 13, wherein~~ comprising an injection-molded thermoplastic body including a scalpel holder and a closable sharps receiving container, the scalpel holder having a blade receiving zone and a handle gripping area that cooperate to support a scalpel in a cantilever arrangement whereby a substantial portion of the length of the scalpel handle is free of obstruction and it is thereby readily grasped, the receiving container being adjacent said blade receiving zone and remote from said gripping area,

said receiving container ~~comprises~~ comprising a shallow box including a bottom wall, said bottom wall having a magnetic sheet for holding sharps.

16. (original) A surgical sharps handling device as set forth in claim 15, wherein said magnetic sheet includes a grid to facilitate counting of sharps received in said container.

17. (original) A surgical sharps handling device as set forth in claim 16, including a cover for said container, said cover being sufficiently transparent to permit counting of sharps in said container when said cover is closed.

18. (currently amended) A surgical sharps handling device as set forth in claim 13, including finger guards on opposite sides of said scalpel holder arranged to protect the fingers of a nurse when holding the device in the fingertips of one hand for presentation of the scalpel to a surgeon.

19. (currently amended) A surgical sharps handling device as set forth in claim 13, wherein said scalpel holder has a wasp waist area with a narrow zone between wider zones to obtain with one hand a positive finger hold of the device.

20. (currently amended) A multi-purpose surgical sharps handling device ~~as set forth in claim 13, wherein~~ comprising an injection-molded thermoplastic body including a scalpel holder and a closable sharps

receiving container, the scalpel holder having a blade receiving zone and a handle gripping area that cooperate to support a scalpel in a cantilever arrangement whereby a substantial portion of the length of the scalpel handle is free of obstruction and it is thereby readily grasped, the receiving container being adjacent said blade receiving zone and remote from said gripping area,

said scalpel holder ~~includes~~ including a magnetic needle holding area having an open slot, the magnetic holding area ~~straddling said slot~~ having magnetic material on each lateral side of said slot.

21. (cancelled).

22. (cancelled).

23. (currently amended) A multi-purpose surgical sharps handling device ~~as set forth in claim 22, wherein~~ comprising an injection-molded thermoplastic body including a scalpel holder and a closable sharps receiving container, the scalpel holder having a blade receiving zone and a handle gripping area that cooperate to support a scalpel in a cantilever arrangement whereby a substantial portion of the length of the scalpel handle is free of obstruction and it is thereby readily grasped, the receiving container being adjacent said blade receiving zone and remote from said gripping area,

the scalpel holder and sharps receiving container being accessible from a common face of the device,

a suture pack mounting zone on a face of said device opposite said common face,

said mounting zone ~~is~~ being partially formed by legs on said opposite face.

24. (original) A surgical sharps handling device as set forth in claim 23, wherein said legs include pressure-sensitive adhesive for adhering said device to a supporting surface.

25. (currently amended) A multi-purpose surgical sharps handling device ~~as set forth in claim 13, including~~ comprising an injection-molded thermoplastic body including a scalpel holder and a closable sharps receiving container, the scalpel holder having a blade receiving zone and a handle gripping area that cooperate to support a scalpel in a cantilever arrangement whereby a substantial portion of the length of the scalpel handle is free of obstruction and it is thereby readily grasped, the receiving container being adjacent said blade receiving zone and remote from said gripping area, and

a magnetic sheet disposed in said container to magnetically retain sharps in said container.

26. (original) A surgical sharps handling device as set forth in claim 25, including a grid visually dividing

the magnetic sheet in the container to facilitate counting of sharps deposited therein.

27. (original) A device as set forth in claim 9, including a V-shaped notch for receiving and guiding the scalpel blade.

28. (original) A device as set forth in claim 13, wherein a portion of said body has an exterior non-slip surface.